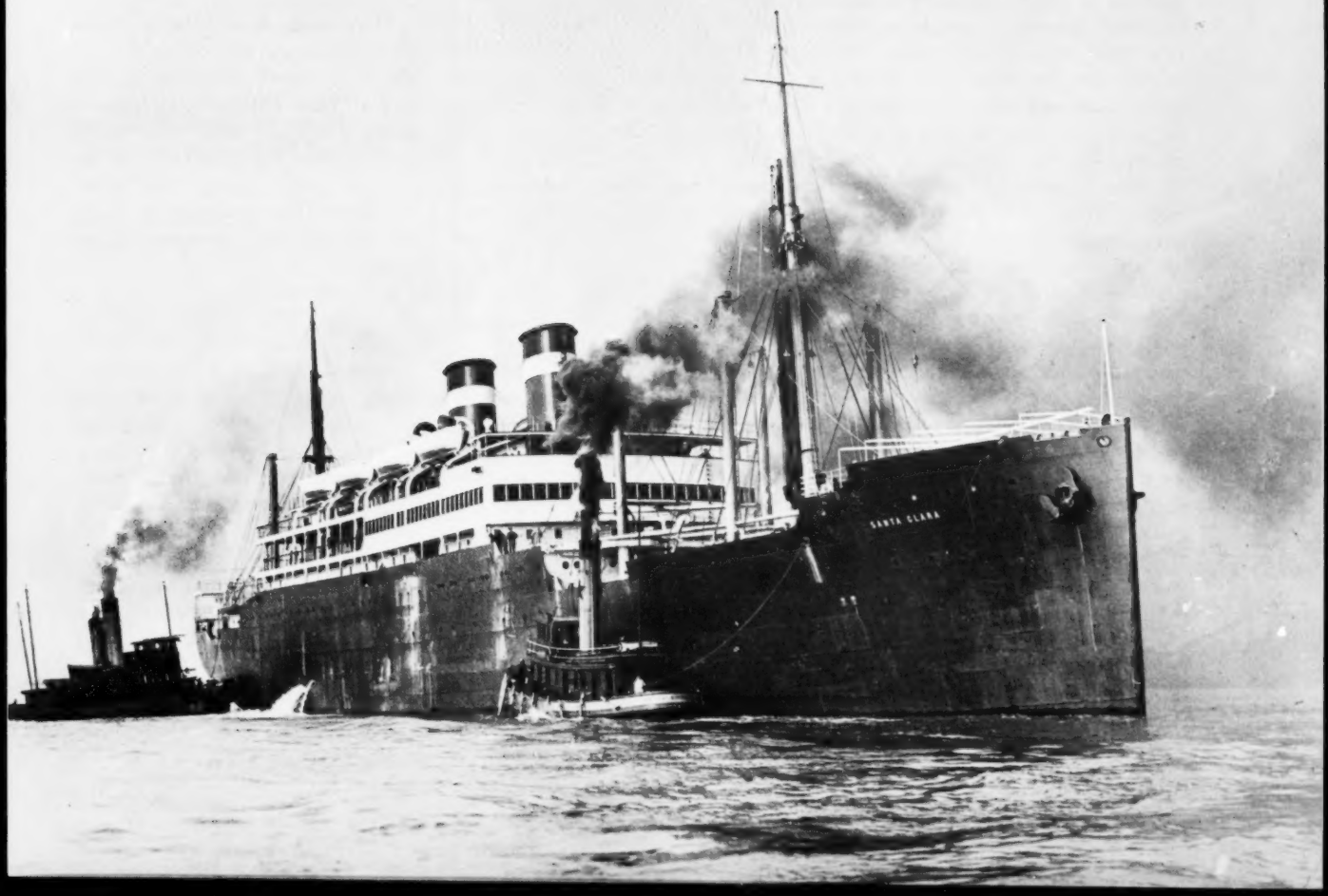
Sealift

MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

November 1979



Thanksgiving—A Part of Our American Heritage

People of each of the world's nations are proud of their own cultures and their unique traditions. Their pride is justified for the histories of those countries cover many centuries.

The United States of America, by contrast, is a relatively new nation. We observed our 200th anniversary only three years ago.

However, we have traditions—those that have stood the test of time and others that are described as "new" by those who study mankind's evolution over thousands, even millions of years.

The United States often has been referred to, somewhat inelegantly, as a melting pot.

Our national strength is that we encourage the perpetuation and practice of ethnic traditions which our many ancestors brought to our new land from Europe, from the Middle and Far East, from North, South, East and West. But, just as the alloy we know as steel is even stronger than the basic elements that go into its making, our American values, like our traditions, have gained added strength because they too are forged from a number of ideals our forefathers cherished.

Our many freedoms and opportunities exist primarily because those who settled our land came here with dreams and hopes. They braved untold dangers and conquered uncounted challenges to develop what we now know as the American way of life.

Early in the history of our new land they initiated a peculiarly American tradition observed annually by millions of American families without regard to race, religion, the origin of their ancestors, or their economic or career standing. That tradition is Thanksgiving, a national holiday on which we gather our families and friends and express our

thanks for the many benefits we enjoy.

Some of us may appear to have a greater number of reasons to be thankful. Some Americans are richer than others, if riches are measured solely in terms of money, houses, cars and portfolios of stocks and bonds.

Some may appear to be more powerful, if they occupy positions of political power, if they are high up in the hierarchy of our business organizations, or if they shape the policies of religious, educational or military institutions.

Some Americans may appear to have greater reason to be thankful if the children they have brought into this world have attained their own successes—if they have moved upward to excel as students, lawyers, economists, physicists, businessmen or in other professions that far too often are equated with success.

But, that is not the American way for we firmly believe, and we continue to demonstrate, that this is indeed the land of opportunity, a land where all are created free and equal. Our equality is not diminished by the fact that some may have acquired greater material wealth or hold a more prestigious position. Neither is our freedom limited by law, or by social practices that set behavioral standards.

The American way of life promises opportunity but it does not require that we take advantage of others to achieve happiness. Rich or poor, our power is equal at the ballot box and in the courts of justice. No one is denied opportunity and no one can be deprived of his right to the pursuit of happiness, to freedom to do what he wishes to do, to live where he desires to live, and to choose to worship in whatever manner he pleases.

That is not to deny reality. Injustices do exist, even in the American society. Some of us are less tolerant than we should be and prejudice is not yet fully overcome. Hate, despair and other base emotions continue to exist but they are generally overpowered by compassion, love, a regard for our fellow man and a confidence in our own abilities.

Thus, there is justifiable reason for Americans to give thanks for that which we have achieved in 203 years. Our nation is strong—stronger than any other. The wealth and resources that abound in our nation are great—greater than that of any other. The freedoms we enjoy are assured, and they only grow stronger.

Wherever we may be on Thanksgiving day 1979, at home with our families, serving our nation in some foreign land or on a far-reaching ocean, we should reflect on what we have accomplished both as individuals and as a nation. And in so doing we should pledge our efforts toward achievement of greater results in the future so that there need be no fear that a uniquely American tradition—a day for giving thanks—will ever be separated from our American heritage.⚓

COVER: The Grace Line Ship Santa Clara was under Navy control in 1942 and participated in the Allied invasion of North Africa. It struck a mine in 1944 and sank in the English Channel. See story on page 14.

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MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

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'Inner Man' Makes Out Like King As MSC Cooks Strive for Perfection

By Suzanne J. Stack

Cold Cut Cooley and Hot Dog Harry are no more. They have been ousted from ship galleys and a new breed of cooks, bakers and stewards are sailing on Military Sealift Command ships.

"We've replaced 'stewburners' with gourmet cooks," boasted Henry (Robby) Robinson, director of ship liaison and port steward at MSC, Pacific. "Civilian mariners don't want Navy steam pot cooking."

Civil Service seamen certainly won't be sitting down to that type of meal November 22. "Thanksgiving ranks with Christmas and captain's dinner as the most important meals aboard ship," says Robinson. (A captain's dinner is given for a retiring master or to celebrate arrival into home port after a long voyage.)

Robinson should know. "I'm a 35-year man," he'll tell anyone proudly. He started his seagoing career as an 18-year-old working in a galley on an Army transport. During the next 21 years, he worked his way up from cook and baker to chief cook and then became chief steward aboard troop carriers run by MSC.

"I sailed as chief steward on Petraca, Davis, Persius, Swan and the C-4 Eltinge—the best troopship afloat," remembered Robby fondly.

Robinson has been working ashore in the port steward department of the Pacific area command in Oakland, Calif. for the past 12 years so he'll be home for Thanksgiving this year. However, he remembers the many holidays he spent at sea. Thanksgiving of 1949 is still fresh in his mind. Officers aboard the VC-2 troopship S.S. Munimori, the only U.S. ship named for an American of Japanese descent, showed him that year how much Thanksgiving away from home meant.

"I thought I'd never live through the day. We were in the middle of a terrible storm and the troopship just wallowed in the waves. I'd been told a ship couldn't stay afloat if it listed more than 45 degrees but I swear the Munimori listed more. It was so bad that the chief steward suggested to the master that we serve Thanksgiving dinner cafeteria style since nothing would stay on the table and we could hardly walk.

"But, the officers insisted on a sitdown dinner. We wet down tablecloths so dishes and silverware would stick, weighted down table decorations and went ahead and served a three-course dinner.

"I'd stand behind an officer, one hand clutching a railing, the other with a deathgrip on a filled plate, wait 'til the ship pitched in the right direction and then slide down to serve him. Didn't drop a single plate. No one got sick and the dinner was so good the officers broke into applause at the end."

Munimori made it to Okinawa and on its return to Honolulu members of the Munimori family came on board with a Buddhist monk and consecrated the ship. Must have worked since Robinson didn't mention any storms after that.

Robby served the Thanksgiving meal that year but later he became the cook. What did he serve? "I'm a southern boy. It's mandatory to have baked Virginia ham with raisin or Hawaiian sauce in addition to turkey." Influenced by his home state of Louisiana, Robby served his mom's oyster stuffing plus corn stuffing with whole kernels of corn.

"Dirty rice," cooked white rice with diced green onions, celery, chicken livers and giblets, was another Robinson staple.

Thanksgiving menus vary from MSC ship to ship. Each chief cook has his own favorite recipes and crews differ in their likes and dislikes.

MSC ships sail out of port packed to capacity with every food item they might need during a mission.

Stewards can order from local ports only in emergencies so everything for a Thanksgiving feast must be in the larder. Cooks and stewards work together to turn out great meals, with an eye on their monthly budget. Cost per person per day must average out to $4.50 over an entire month.

If a meal isn't good, feedback is immediate. "Crewmembers aren't shy. If they don't like something, they let the steward know in no uncertain terms," explained Emil Doering, assistant director of ship liaison, port steward branch for MSC, Atlantic.

It is difficult to predict crew likes and dislikes. Doering who spent 11 of his 31 years as steward on passenger and U.N. refugee ships recalled one group of passengers who refused to eat ham, while the next group demanded it. (Religion didn't play a part.)

Liver is always risky he has found. Robinson recommends that stewards avoid serving aspic salads and cold soups. "They will just sit there after one mouthful."

One MSC chief steward who has a recognized ability to tickle the palates of a crew is Lindon Chambers. He now displays his culinary skill aboard USNS Vandenberg, a missile range instrumentation ship. He was named Marine Employee of the Year in 1978 for his knack in satisfying both the ship's crew and MSC management.

Henry Robinson, ship liaison and port steward at MSC, Pacific, discusses an inspection report with Ampy Mendioro, in-port steward.

Emil Doering was ship steward aboard a U.N. ship carrying 1,000 mail-order brides from Greece to Australia.

A copy of last year's Thanksgiving feast aboard USNS Vandenberg was on file in the port steward's office in Bayonne. A quick look showed why the crew lauded Chambers. A turkey would be less stuffed than a crewmember who gobbled everything on that holiday menu.

The meal began with several types of hors d'oeuvres capped by a jumbo shrimp cocktail and followed by puree of pea soup, a fish course of fresh baked sockeye salmon with butter sauce and a choice of three entrees: baked Westphalian ham, roast Oregon turkey with stuffing or stuffed bell pepper with creole sauce. Also available were the traditional accompaniments and salads.

Whatever hunger pangs remained could be sated with hot mince or pumpkin pie, homemade fruitcake, ice cream or sherbert. And that's a condensed version of a Thanksgiving menu that included "eggs to order for watchstanders."

Later that night, many of the Vandenberg crew may have wished they hadn't eaten so heartily. Doering recognizes that overeating can cause problems—a realization gained when he worked as a steward on ships carrying United Nation troops and refugees.

"We carried foreign troops to Korea and displaced persons to Australia," he said, "and these people were hungry. They hadn't eaten well for a long time. Their stomachs just weren't ready for great quantities of American food. We cut back food portions but one of my main duties the first few nights out was to make sure people didn't eat too much."

Turkish troops were a particular problem. "Those soldiers were starving. They just didn't feed those boys. I used to stand by the breadbasket and limit soldiers to one roll apiece until their systems adjusted to the meals we served."

Unlike Robinson, Doering best remembers a particular Christmas meal. In 1950, he was steward on a Navy ship with Hungarians, Poles, Ukrainians and Italians as passengers. All were displaced persons who had been "kicked around Europe" after they lost their homes in World War II. They were going to new homes in the United States but they were at sea on December 25.

The Navy provided Christmas trees, decorations and gifts for every passenger. "We served a gala dinner and a crewmember dressed up as Santa Claus gave gifts to both kids and adults. I can't forget their faces. So many hadn't had a Christmas in years."

Port stewards enjoy their memories but each day brings new challenges to master. They work hard. Every ship that sails into Bayonne or Oakland for supplies or refitting, eventually has contact with either Robinson or Doering. In fact, Robinson characterizes his liaison job as "doing anything someone else doesn't want to do."

"Sometimes I think 'See Robby' is a catchword," said Robinson ruefully. He thinks it is because he is a good listener who knows his way around Oakland.

A port steward screens every order for Navy food supplies to see that the ship's steward is ordering sufficient quantity and variety. He checks out local contractors to supply items not available in naval stores. Most are listed in a contract bulletin. Each month he gets copies of menus for every meal served aboard ship and looks them over to make certain they are varied—and that mariners' overall diet is balanced and adequate.

Cost accounting is an important part of a steward's job and Doering's hotel and restaurant management experience comes in handy here. Robinson especially tries to lend a helping hand to stewards with little administrative background. "I want to encourage more cooks and bakers to try for a steward's job rather than having an outside man coming in as steward just because he has broader experience."

If armies march on their stomachs, it's no doubt true that mariners sail on theirs. In MSC, one has only to visit a ship, scan a menu, and taste the varied items that are offered to realize that command mariners eat very well, and that the men and women who are part of the steward's department knock themselves out to please their "customers." ⚓

Mystery of the Edmund Fitzgerald

By Paul Woodall

"We're holding our own," the mate of the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald reported even as 25-foot storm waves were sweeping over the listing freighter's deck. Within an hour the ore carrier sank in eastern Lake Superior carrying its entire crew of 29 to their deaths. It was the only ship to sink during a violent storm on Lake Superior on Nov. 10, 1975.

Did the Fitzgerald sink that evening because of structural hatch failure as the National Transportation Safety Board claims? Or, did the freighter go to the bottom after striking a shoal as the Lake Carriers Assn. claims? Was the ship overloaded as the Seafarers International Union has said?

There are no witnesses or survivors to answer these questions.

The crew of the Fitzgerald vanished without launching lifeboats or liferafts, donning life jackets or even sending a distress call. Their bodies were never found. Neither were their personal effects.

The broken wreck of the Fitzgerald was found mired in mud at the bottom of the lake less than 17 miles from the entrance of Whitefish Bay, Mich. The freighter was found approximately where it was last seen on radar, but under 530 feet of water.

The wreck consisted of two large pieces. A bow section was sitting nearly upright on the bottom. About 170 feet away and upside down was the stern section. The 200-foot midsection was missing although its cargo of iron ore was spilled all over the wreck.

Photos taken by an unmanned diving vessel show the forward deckhouse had been damaged. Several gaping holes had been punched in the bow shell. Many hatch covers were missing or buckled and damage was greatest near the missing midsection. Several hatch coamings were fractured or distorted.

The exposed section of the stern had no ruptures or holes and the rudder and propeller appeared to be undamaged.

"The proximate cause of the loss of the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald cannot be determined," concluded the U.S. Coast Guard after examining the underwater photos and interviewing crews of ships that had been in the area that night. Nonetheless what follows is the Coast Guard's informed guess as to the last voyage of the Fitzgerald.

On November 9, the Fitzgerald sailed out of Superior, Wisc. with a full load of iron ore taconite pellets. It was headed for Detroit. The 729-foot straightdecker Great Lakes ore carrier rode low in the water.

She could carry 26,116 long tons of taconite only because of a 3-foot, 3¼-inch reduction in minimum freeboard permissible under the 1973 Great Lakes Load Line Regulations.

Loading and departure were uneventful.

The crew of the Fitzgerald consisted of a master, 3 licensed deck officers, chief engineer, 4 licensed engineering officers and 20 unlicensed seamen.

Master Ernest M. McSorley, of Toledo, Ohio and first mate John H. McCarthy, of Bay Village, Ohio, were seasoned Great Lakes mariners who earned their licenses in 1938 and 1941 respectively. McSorley had commanded the Fitzgerald for three years. The other mates had held licenses as first class Great Lake pilots for at least two years. The engineers were equally experienced.

Weather was mild for November and the freighter sailed at full speed. By 2 a.m. the morning of the 10th, however, the National Weather Service issued gale warnings for Lake Superior.

The ship was traveling in the company of another freighter, the S.S. Arthur M. Anderson, sailing about 17 miles ahead of Fitzgerald.

Captain McSorley discussed the storm warnings with Capt. Jesse B. Cooper of the Anderson and both decided to depart from the recommended shipping lanes along the southern shore. They chose a more northeasterly course in order to be in the lee of the Canadian shore, common practice during fall and winter storms on the lake.

Early in the morning, the Anderson changed course slightly. The Fitzgerald, a faster ship, pulled ahead. For the next 13 hours, those on watch on the Anderson could see the big ore carrier approximately 16 miles ahead of them. Snow eventually cut off their view.

"The ship is rolling some," reported Captain McSorley early in the afternoon. It was the first sign of trouble aboard Fitzgerald.

By 3:30 p.m., less than two hours later, the freighter had a fence rail down and two vents were lost or broken. A list also had developed.

Captain McSorley radioed Anderson and asked Captain Cooper to close the distance between the two vessels, saying he would "check down" (reduce speed) to allow the slower ship to catch up.

"Do you have your pumps on?" Captain Cooper asked.

"Yes, both of them," was the reply.

Officers aboard the Anderson who heard this conversation did not think McSorley sounded afraid for his ship. And he didn't mention the

cause of the topside damage.

The Coast Guard believes Fitzgerald was struck by a floating object washed aboard the deck by storm waves. Topside damage partially flooded ballast tanks and the tunnel, causing a trim and list. The Fitzgerald had its four 7,000 gallons per minute ballast pumps and two 2,000 g.p.m. auxiliary ballast pumps turned on.

"Radars aren't working" was the next message the first mate aboard the Anderson received. That came at 4:10 p.m. The first mate agreed to provide navigational assistance and to track the Fitzgerald on radar.

Winds rose to 58 knots and a light snow began to fall. The watch on the Anderson lost sight of the Fitzgerald at 4:20 p.m. The ship would never be seen again. Radar was now the only means of visual contact.

Fitzgerald passed three to five miles east of Caribou Island sometime between 4 and 4:30 p.m. heading towards Whitefish Bay and the Sault Ste. Marie locks. Anderson was approximately 16 miles behind. Both ships were battling waves that surged as high as 25 feet.

The radio beacon on Whitefish Point had lost power so the damaged ore carrier radioed for navigational help.

The Swedish vessel Avafors, upbound near the Point, responded to the request. During one of many conversations, Avafors' captain Cedric C. Woodward overheard McSorley bellow, "Don't allow nobody on deck" in answer to a crew member's question. McSorley mumbled something about a vent but Woodward could not understand what was said.

Fitzgerald now was listing badly and McSorley told Woodward that his ship was taking heavy seas over the deck in one of the worst seas he had ever been in.

Waves were 18 to 25 feet high and the Coast Guard hypothesizes that these waves may have seemed even higher with the Fitzgerald riding so low in the water. Cargo hold

The Edmund Fitzgerald went down in a storm on Lake Superior. The 29-man crew vanished without launching lifeboats or sending a distress call. Their bodies or personal effects were never found.

flooding would have reduced her already minimum freehold. This allowed waves to pound the hatch covers already allowing tons of water into the cargo hold.

The ship did not have watertight cargo bulkheads and water in the hold was free to migrate forward, aggravating the trim and thus increasing the rate of flooding. Flooding was exceeding pump capacity.

The last contact with the Fitzgerald came at 6:30 p.m. The mate on watch on the Anderson radioed the damaged freighter to give her location as it showed on radar. Before he signed off, the mate asked: "How are you making out with your problems?"

"We're holding our own," was the reply.

"Okay, fine. I will be talking to you later."

It was the last report from the Fitzgerald.

Snow flurries and high waves distorted the Anderson's radar at 7:10 p.m. When it cleared the Fitzgerald had disappeared from the radar screen. The radar had shown her just moments before 16 miles northwest of Whitefish Point, 9 miles ahead and 1½ miles east of the Anderson's heading flasher.

The snow stopped and First Mate Morgan Clark standing on the Anderson could see shore lights less than 20 miles away. But he saw no lights where the Fitzgerald should have been. Efforts to contact the freighter failed.

"I just hope he didn't take a nose dive" Captain Cooper told the Coast Guard at Sault Ste. Marie reporting his fears for the Fitzgerald an hour later.

The storm hung on hampering the search for the missing ship. However, by 11 p.m. a joint American-Canadian air and sea search was under way. The search went on for two days but no survivors or bodies were found, only small pieces of wreckage and lifesaving equipment. The wreck wasn't positively identified until the spring of 1976.

According to the Coast Guard, the Fitzgerald did take a 'nose dive' that evening. This is their report of the ship's last minutes:

"Finally, as the storm reached its peak intensity, so much freeboard was lost that the bow pitched down and dove into a wall of water and the vessel was unable to recover. Within a matter of minutes, the cargo rushed forward, the bow plowed into the bottom of the lake and the midships structure disintegrated allowing the submerged stern section, now emptied of cargo, to roll over and override the other structure, finally coming to rest upside down atop the disintegrated middle portion of the ship."

The National Transportation Safety Board concurred in some of the Coast Guard findings but concluded, with one dissenting decision, that the probable cause of the accident was "sudden massive flooding of the cargo hold due to the collapse of one or more hatch covers," the result of heavy pounding

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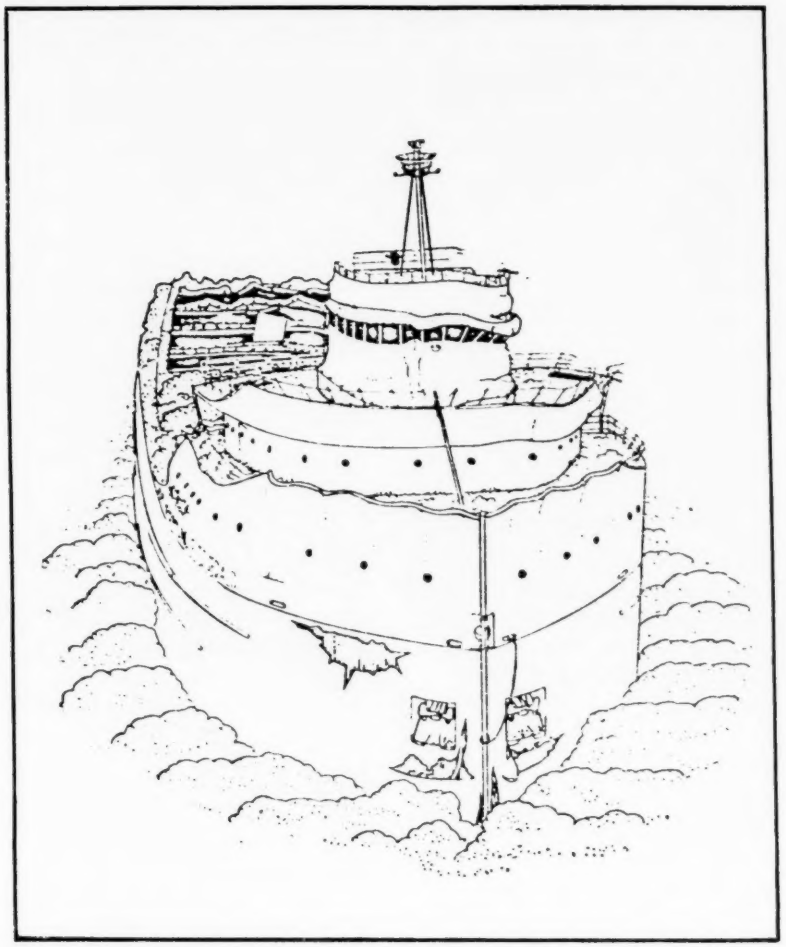


Broken in two parts with its midsection missing, the ship was found under 530 feet of water where it was last seen on radar. The bow (above) was upright and the stern section was upside down about 170 feet away.

Fitzgerald

Continued

by boarding seas, aggravated flooding from topside damage and non-weathertight hatch covers.

What of the 29 men whose bodies were never recovered? According to the board reports, there was no evidence that the crew attempted to use any lifesaving equipment or that the equipment failed. Lifeboats appeared to have been torn away from their chocks, grips and falls as the ship went down. Liferafts also had been released from their racks and had automatically inflated.

Experts felt launching of a lifeboat would have been very difficult in the weather and sea conditions existing at the time of the Fitzgerald's sinking.

Retired Coast Guard Adm. Paul E. Trimble, president of the Lake Carriers Assn. later said, "I want to make it clear that Coast Guard admits in its report that it doesn't know why the ship sank, and we probably never will know. Their report is nothing more than a theory. . ." He felt the Fitzgerald had struck a shoal, causing her to sink.

Seafarers International Union officials did not buy the shoal theory, saying that McSorley in his last conversation with the Anderson had made no mention of a shoal, adding that if he had hit one he could have grounded his ship or put her to the lee side of Caribou Island.

Union officials also discounted the hatch theory saying it could have been a contributing factor at most. They also charged that the Coast Guard had failed to maintain lights and radio beacons, thus placing undue reliance on ship's radar, and also had failed to provide survival suits or capsules for each seaman.

Stress was placed on an alleged overloading which led to loss of buoyancy. This was blamed on the owners, whom, the union said, sought to increase profit at the expense of safety.

It was also pointed out that there were no adequate watertight compartments on the Fitzgerald, the vessel was undermanned and that it took the nearest Coast Guard vessel 12 hours to reach the area where the vessel went down.

In its report, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended that the Coast Guard take several future actions. They included:

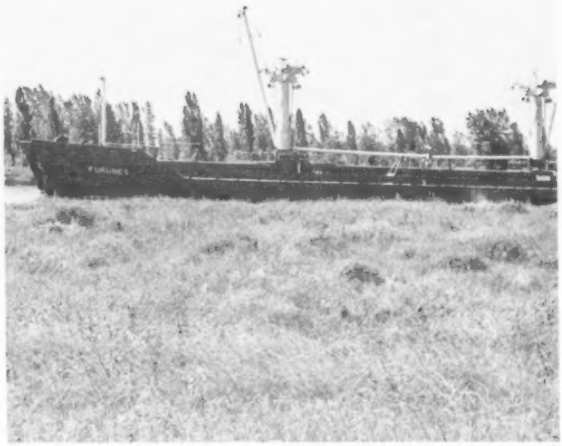
- "Insure that all (ship) hatch covers and vents are in good repair and are capable of being made watertight at annual inspections before the spring shipping season and the winter load line season.
- "Use its ship-rider program and hatch cover inspections at cargo loading facilities to prevent sailings of any vessel that is not equipped with watertight hatch covers.
- "Report the number of hatch cover inspections made of Great Lake bulk cargo vessels and of sailings prevented or restricted because of non-watertight closures over the next two years so an accurate accounting can be made.
- "Investigate, with the American Bureau of Shipping, the effects that permitted deeper drafts have on the strength of Great Lakes bulk cargo vessels."

What actually happened? Only those who rest with their ship really know. ⚓

St. Lawrence Seaway Leads to Mid-America

Story and photos by Martin Gershen

Wendell Routhier, chief lockmaster at Soo Lock, makes a final check on a ship heading into Lake Superior.



The British ship Furunes appears to have run aground. Actually it is moving on the seaway.

The St. Lawrence Seaway, a maritime artery leading to the heart of North America, has been celebrating anniversaries this year as if they were going out of style.

First there was the 20th anniversary of the opening of the seaway to deep draft shipping which occurred April 25, 1959.

Then there was the 20th anniversary of the formal dedication of the seaway held June 26, 1959 when 50,000 spectators watched Queen Elizabeth II and President Dwight D. Eisenhower sail aboard HMS Brittania through ceremonial gates spanning the approach to the St. Lambert Lock.

May 13, 1979 marked the 25th anniversary of formation of the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. This U.S. Government sponsored company along with Canada's St. Lawrence Seaway Authority operate the international waterway that has been described as a fourth coastline of each country.

On Sept. 7, 1979, ceremonies were held in both countries to mark the 20th anniversary of the seaway's opening and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Welland Canal which bypasses Niagara Falls and joins Lake Erie with Lake Ontario.

The billion dollar complex of lakes, locks, rivers and canals that snake their way 2,342 miles into the U.S. and Canadian interiors, today is an international waterway used by ships of many nations.

And the landbound ports of this seaway having such strange sounding names as Sarnia and Sault Ste. Marie, Contrecoeur, Manitowoc and Calice are as much faraway places to foreign seamen as Puerto Belgrano, Matarani, Chinhae, Tengan and

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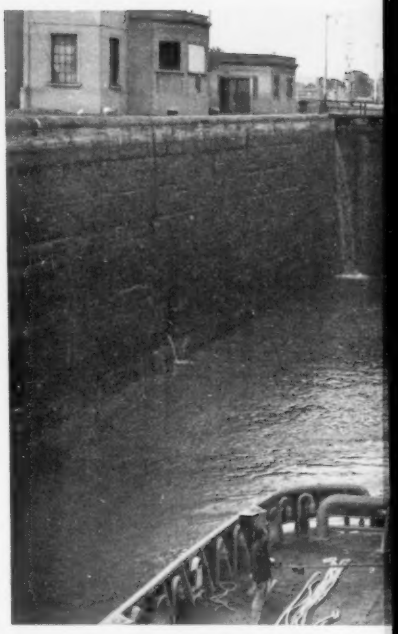


MSC's newest ship, USNS Powhatan, leaves a lock on the scenic Welland Canal on its maiden voyage from Wisconsin to Norfolk, Va.

St. Lawrence

Continued

Zeebrugge may be for MSC mariners.

Indeed, the age old American custom of scratching your name or that of your ship on some piece of foreign soil has gone international. In Massena, N.Y., for example, the U.S. headquarters for the St. Lawrence Seaway, names and observations have been permanently inscribed by seamen from the Orient, the Middle East and elsewhere as they passed through the locks leading to the five Great Lakes.

The idea of developing a waterway from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Superior which is the most distant point of the Great Lakes is as old as history.

Ships and men worked their way from the Atlantic to the American interior long before the seaway became official 20 years ago.

Jacques Cartier, the French explorer who discovered and named the St. Lawrence River in 1535, sailed the 1,000 miles from the Atlantic to an Indian village, now called Montreal, before he was stopped.

The problem, of course, was the rapids: The Lachine rapids between Montreal and Lake St. Louis, Niagara Falls that separates Lake Erie from Lake Ontario and Sault Ste. Marie where Lake Superior and Lake Huron meet.

For the Indians and their canoes, the rapids didn't present too big a problem.

In Sault Ste. Marie, named by the French explorer Pere Jacques Marquette in 1668 and known in English as St. Mary's Falls, the Ojibway Indians carried their canoes past the rapids and continued their voyage. The Indians called the falls Bawatang, which means fast water or rapids.

Even before the modern St. Lawrence Seaway was built, small European vessels, Norwegian American and Canadian ships constructed especially for the lakes trade, moved through smaller locks and canals.

To go through the St. Lawrence Seaway, the ships went through the Lachine Canal which no longer exists.

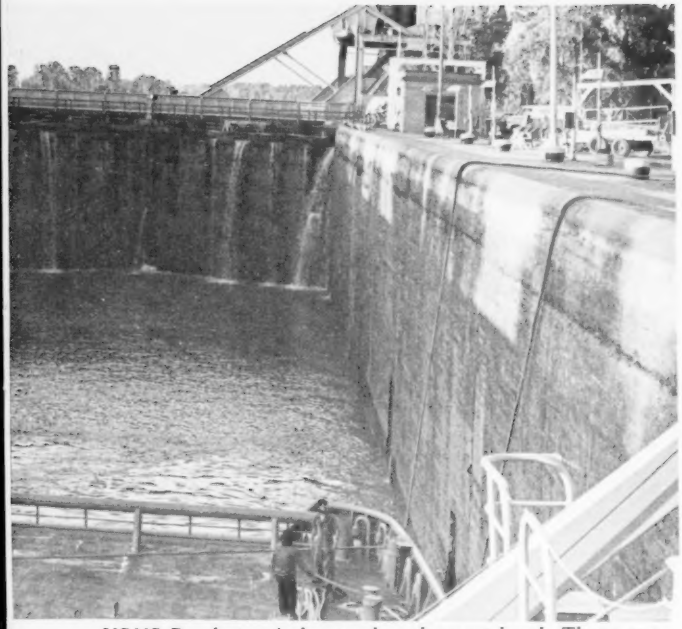
At Sault Ste. Marie, ships have sailed between Lakes Huron and Superior since 1797 when Canadians built a lock on their side of the rapids. It was destroyed by Americans in the War of 1812 but the United States built a new lock in 1855. Today four American and one Canadian lock connect the two lakes.

Unlike the rest of the locks in the Seaway, the American ones in Sault Ste. Marie are free. They are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

But the locks at Soo, as the area is popularly known because Sault is often spelled as it is pronounced, were not the first to be built.

The first major canal built on the lakes was completed in 1825. On October 25 of that year, the Seneca Chief sailed from Lake Erie to the Atlantic Ocean through the Hudson River.

But the Canadians soon forged ahead and generally have played a



USNS Powhatan is lowered to the next level. There are eight locks in the 28-mile-long Welland Canal which drops vessels from 572 feet to 246 feet above sea level.

A ship enters a lock to be raised to higher sea level.

major role in the development of the seaway.

The 150th anniversary of the opening of the Welland Canal will be marked this November 27 commemorating the passage through the canal of two ships, the Annie and Jane, of York, Canada and the R.H. Broughton, of Youngstown, N.Y.

It took these ships three days of arduous steering through 40 wooden locks to transit through the canal and sail into Lake Erie. Today the passage can be made through eight locks in a matter of hours.

Interestingly enough, the man who built the Welland Canal, William Hamilton Merritt, was an American born in upstate New York. He became a Canadian when his family migrated to Canada when he was three.

Merritt was a Canadian militiaman during the War of 1812. He was captured by U.S. troops in a raid and spent several months as a POW.

The route from the highest point in the seaway, Duluth, Minn., to the sea drops 602 feet. Looking at it another way, a ship must climb the equivalent of a 60-story skyscraper after it leaves the Atlantic enroute to Duluth.

So if a Minnesota youngster develops Sea Fever, described by the British poet laureate John Masefield, and "must go down to the sea again," he has to literally descend from an enormous height to reach sea level.

Today, of course, even mighty ocean vessels can do it. Deep sea ships known as salties come in all sizes as they proceed to the lakes ports. The only requirement is that each must be equipped with a boom on the bow to swing a seaman ashore to handle the lines as the ship ties up or goes through the locks.

Lakers, as vessels that sail only in the Great Lakes are called, are as long as 1,000 feet. Their seamen sign up for a season, not a voyage. The season generally lasts about nine to 10 months. But modern technology has improved sailing possibilities even in the frigid winter months. In some areas lake traffic now moves throughout the year.

Technology, however, hasn't been able to keep Canadian geese away from Massena. Many a ship's master has had to radio ahead to the locks saying he will be late because geese are holding him up.

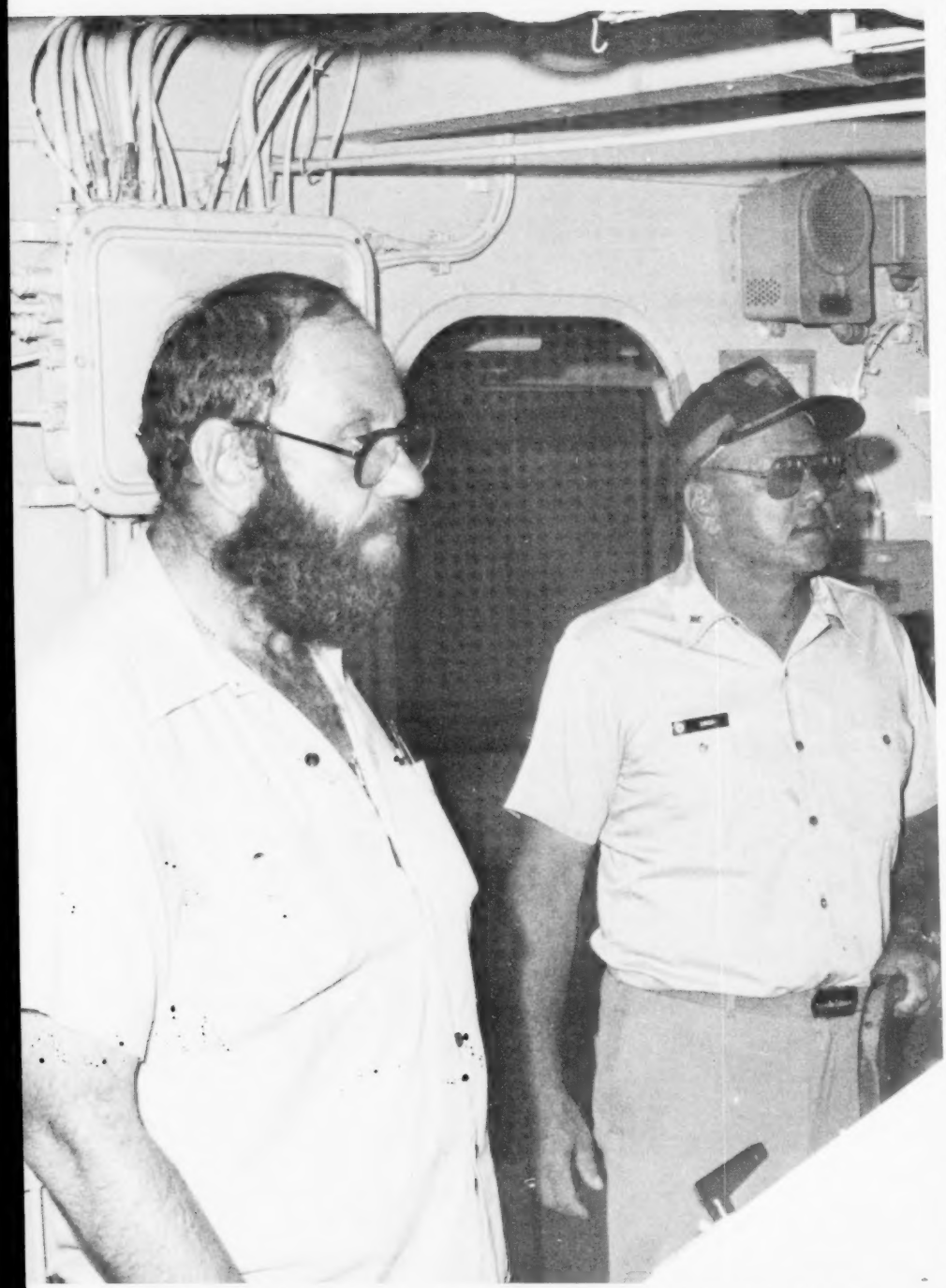
The geese are encouraged by seamen to stay around Massena since crews of grain ships deliberately let some of their cargo go to feed the pleasant birds.

Lakes sailing, as any veteran seaman knows, can be as dangerous as navigating the oceans. In addition to bad and frightening storms, there is a natural phenomenon on the Great Lakes that is encountered nowhere else.

It is called a seiche, an atmospheric occurrence in which the surface of the lake oscillates. It is not unlike tipping a bowl of water. The lake seems to move to one side setting up an enormous wall of water threatening everything in its path, including the land that surrounds it.

On the lighter side is the name of the biggest lock on the Great Lakes. Located in Sault Ste. Marie, it is 1,200 feet long, 110 feet wide and 32 feet deep. Named for a former Army general, it is called the Poe Lock. ⚓

Training Completed, Neosho Joins Fleet



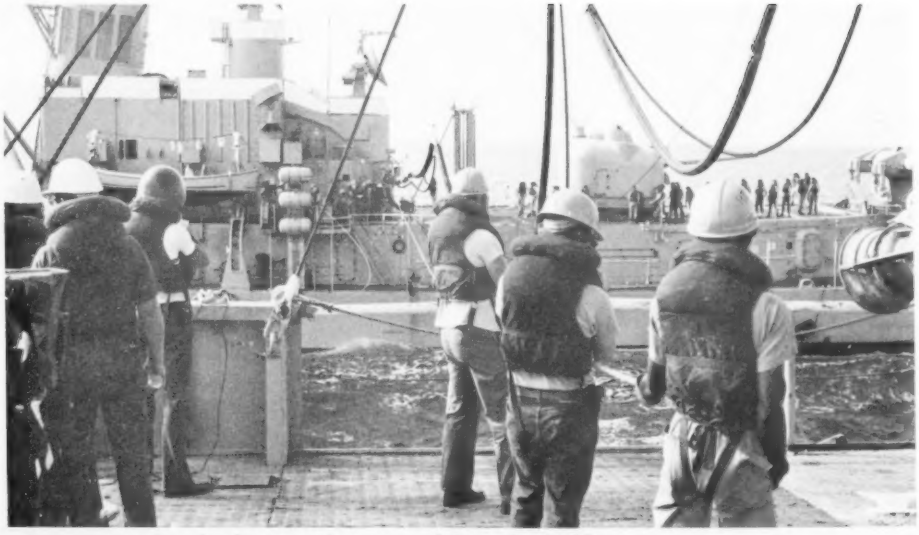
Capt. Paul Sinski (right) joins helmsman Sidney Kolodny on the bridge. Chief engineer is Alexander Belkin and chief steward is David Greene.

The guided missile destroyer USS replenishment. Neosho is operating

Lt. Lesley G. Jackson, officer in ch department, watches operations on t Captain Sinski (right).

USS Dahlgren pulls alongside Neosho for an underway ating with the Second Fleet off the U.S. East Coast.

n charge of the military on the bridge wing with



Crew is waiting for hoses to be returned from the Dahlgren.

Lane Kendall Reminisces

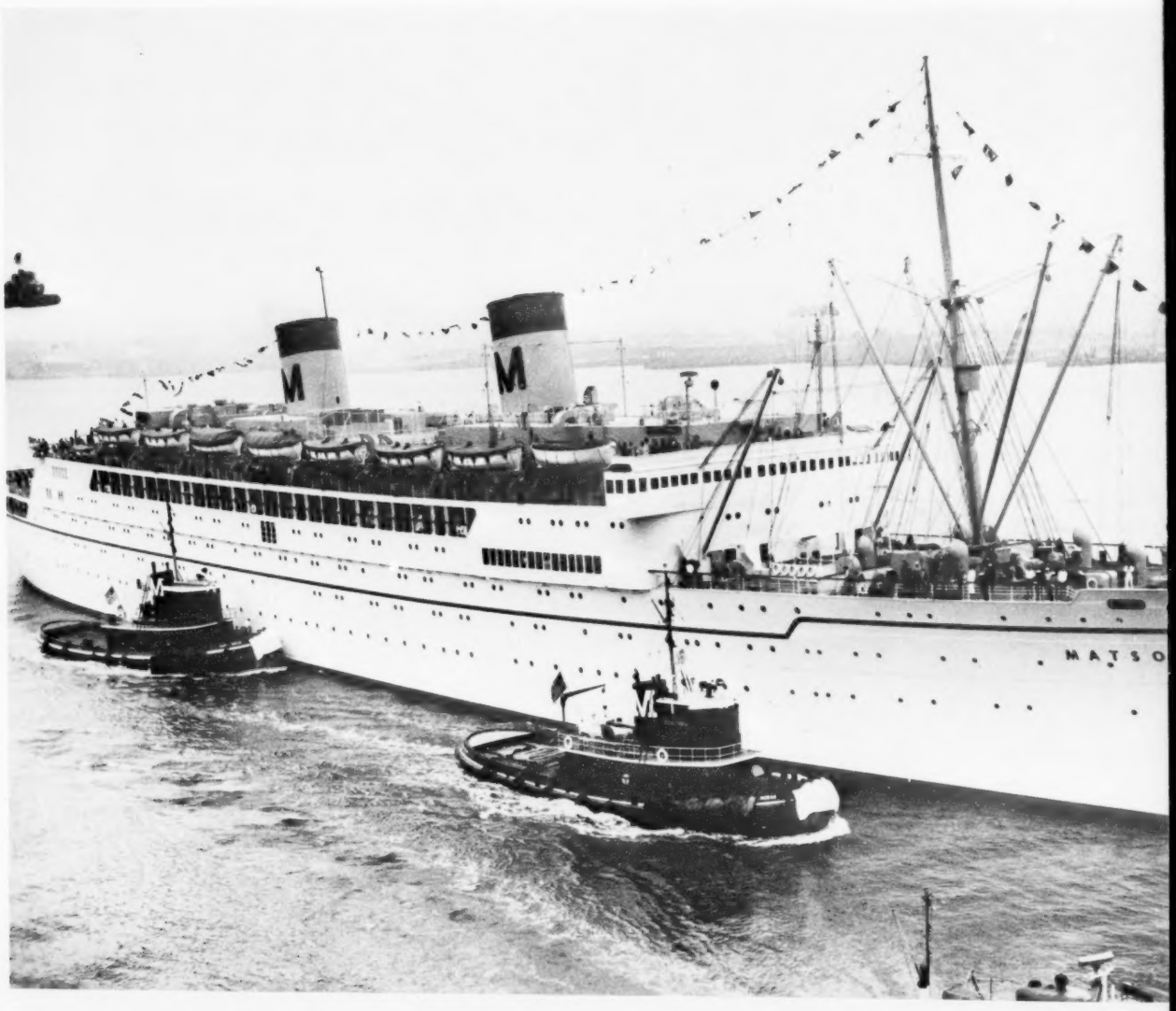
By Lane C. Kendall

Although it was not until November 1935 that I became a part of the American merchant marine, my connections with and interest in ships go back to 1920 when I sailed to France from New Orleans in a small passenger-cargo ship. She was a coal burner, with a reciprocating engine that powered a single propeller. We carried a load of cotton as bottom cargo and an assortment of general cargo on top. It was quite a trip.

Scheduled to last three weeks, it actually took five—four weeks at sea and one week in Newport News getting boilers repaired and taking on a new bunker of coal. After four winter storms, the battering of the seas broke the cargo lashings. On the last day out of Le Havre, everything suddenly combined and we lost rudder control, developed a list of at least 25 degrees and had to be towed into port by four tugs, two ahead and two astern.

Despite this inauspicious beginning, I never have lost my sense of fascination for ships. To this day they exercise a powerful appeal to my mind, and my heart. From 1920 to 1979 covers a fair portion of our national maritime history, a very interesting span of years.

That first ship in which I sailed carried bales of cotton, each one of



which had been hauled up individually over skid boards by a single cargo whip and lowered into the hold where it was forced into place, often with a compressor called a "screw." That technique was used for years after 1920. Just when multiple-bale lifts began, I do not remember.

The winches were noisy, steam-driven affairs of the type which helped to win World War II. They were identical with those installed in Liberty ships.

In the years preceding World War II, and continuing down into the 1950s, longshoremen were hired by the "shape" system. Twice daily, the men formed a semi-circle at the entrance to the transit shed and waited to be selected for gangs which would handle the cargo during the oncoming shift.

The inequities of that system gradually were overcome by the union or government-operated hiring halls which resulted in a much more efficient method of distributing manpower along the waterfront. It was quite a sight to go past the entrances to the New York piers, either at 7:55 a.m. or 12:55 p.m., and observe the groups of workers and the hiring bosses. Why it took so long to effect the change always has been a source of wonder to me.

When I started in the shipping business, practically all cargo was packed to weigh not more than about 300 pounds. It was delivered by truckmen (in my boyhood, these "trucks" were drawn by horses and mules) to the loading platform and there transferred to handcarts pushed by brawny longshoremen.

The closest thing we had to mechanization was the tractor, or "jitney," with its string of trailers on which bags, bales and boxes were piled for shifting around the terminal. The introduction of the pallet board and the forklift truck occurred almost simultaneously, about 1936. It could have been somewhat earlier, but universal adoption of the new method was not evident until this time.

The ships themselves were interesting. In retrospect, however, I am surprised by two things. One is that they were so very similar, regardless of where they were built. The other is the slow speed both at sea and in working cargo which was acceptable to owners and shippers.

A number of cargo ships, built during World War I at Hog Island, Pa. provided the backbone of the American flag fleet. They were geared turbine vessels burning oil, and they cruised at only 10 knots. They had a single 'tween deck, a deep hold, five hatches and five sets of cargo booms—substantially the worldwide pattern. Now and then, a "racer" would appear. She could gain that title by steaming at 12 knots.

Continued

Lane C. Kendall was the commercial shipping advisor for Military Sealift Command from 1960 to 1969 when he retired. Author of The Business of Shipping, *published in 1973, Kendall has written many articles for maritime industry publications and the Naval Institute Proceedings. In 1975 he received the Naval Institute's Special Award for Authors in recognition of his contributions to the Proceedings and the Naval Review over a 36-year period.*

Now living in California, Kendall is a native of New Orleans and a graduate of Tulane University. His shipping career began in 1935 with Grace Line and after wartime service in the Marine Corps, he joined the staff of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 1946, becoming head of the Department of Ship Management in 1950.

The SS Matsonia (left) was built in 1932 as the SS Monterey. After the war it was renamed Matsonia in 1957 and sold to foreign operators in 1970. Transatlantic passenger ships carried little cargo, but large amounts of mail.

Lane Kendall Reminisces

Continued

In the coastwise trade, there were a few structural differences in ships. Hog Islanders were employed on the longer routes, such as New York to Texas, but for the short runs typified by New York to Norfolk or San Francisco to Los Angeles, ships of more individual design were relatively common.

These coastwise carriers usually had two 'tween decks (unimaginatively designated as upper and lower) with access to the upper deck afforded by both hatch and side ports. The advantage of a side port was that longshoremen could push their hand carts up a ramp, into the ship and right to the spot where a piece of cargo would be stowed for the voyage. When forklift trucks came into general use, they followed the same pattern because of the more rapid cargo handling they afforded.

Pressure for faster cargo work was felt most strongly in the passenger-cargo service between New York and Boston. At least one ship left each end of the run every day at 5 p.m., arriving at her destination at 7 a.m. All cargo had to be removed and a new load stowed before the magic hour of 5 p.m., when the next voyage began.

The transatlantic passenger ships carried very little cargo, but hauled great quantitites of mail, express and specie. Specie meant gold in bars and was much desired by ship owners for several really good reasons.

In New York, the Federal Reserve Bank brought the gold down to the terminal and actually supervised the loading, thereby assuming all risks and paying the costs. The gold was stowed in a special security locker, the door of which was welded shut. At the destination, the receiving bank reversed the process.

For the ocean transportation, without any added expenses, a carrier was paid one quarter of one per cent of the total value of the gold. And why was gold shipped back and forth this way? To equalize the U.S. balance of payments in international trade.

Many passenger ships sailed at midnight, while others departed at noon on Saturday from their berths in New York. It was a favorite pasttime to go to South Ferry and ride the "nickel boat" to Staten Island while watching the parade of the big liners. Midnight sailings were exciting to watch, but that was always a pierhead activity.

By comparison with today's port operations, the pace of cargo work during the pre-war years was very deliberate. Except for the killer schedules established—and kept—by a few companies, Grace and Cuba Mail Lines especially, it was not at all unusual for a cargo ship to spend up to 10 days in port. There was no cargo work at night. In fact, few ships had lights by which to carry on such activity. All holidays were observed scrupulously. Even tankers had a slower pace, because their pumps could handle only about 200 tons an hour.

In 1936 the Merchant Marine Act was passed. One of the great achievements of this legislation was its promotion of new designs for cargo ships. There was great excitement in the industry when the first C-2 carrier entered service. With a cruising speed of 14½ knots, five hatches, upper and lower 'tween decks, seven sets of cargo booms and quarters for all personnel which set new standards for the maritime world, the ship was acclaimed as a beauty. She even had cargo lights built into masts and installed below decks!

Shortly after the C-2 appeared, the C-3 was introduced. She had a cubic capacity about 150 per cent larger than that of the C-2, and could cruise at 16, sometimes 17 knots. Some skeptics thought she was too big, predicting that her

750,000 cubic feet of space "never will be filled on a single voyage." How wrong they were!

Almost all of the ships were steam powered. Diesel engines still were regarded with suspicion as to their reliability. Fuel oil was cheap. It cost between 90¢ and $1.40 a barrel in those days. There still were many coal burners in service and I recall vividly seeing coal barges alongside ships with their attendant bucket-equipped cranes pouring coal into the cavernous spaces in these older ships.

During World War II, the whole picture of American shipping changed. The Liberty ship did perpetuate the tradition of the 10-knot, reciprocating engine vessel with a deep hold, shallow 'tween deck and one set of booms per hatch.

The C-type ships and the later war-inspired Victory ship, however, proved the desirability and economic value of electric winches, seven to 10 sets of booms per ship, two 'tween decks and a comparatively shallow hold—and speeds of 15 knots or more.

The T-2 tankers began the revolution which has culminated in the ultra-large crude carriers. I well remember the first T-2 tanker I saw, and how impressed I was with her "huge" size.

Outfitted for Army service in 1942, the Grace Line operated troopship Santa Elena also took part in the invasion of North Africa. It was sunk in 1943 by an aerially launched torpedo near Algeria.

In the three post-war decades, much has happened. Most conspicuous of the changes has been the conversion of service on many trade routes to almost exclusive use of containers. This development began without much fanfare on April 26, 1956, when the *Ideal X*, a T-2 tanker fitted with a special spar deck to which were secured 56 containers, sailed from Port Newark, N.J. for Houston, Texas.

Before long, whole ships were being converted to carry only containers. Bigger and faster ships were built from the keel up for this purpose. Concurrent with the ship changes were the tremendous modifications to the ports.

Crew accommodations on board ship have been upgraded almost unbelievably in recent years. Whereas in my early days in the business, many ships provided dormitory spaces with little or no privacy, individual rooms, some with semi-private bath, are not unusual today. Food is so much better that one cannot begin to compare then and now.

Of enormous interest to those who sailed in the ships was the ratification of the Safety of Life at Sea treaties which resulted in ships of American registry being made fireproof, not just sprinkler-equipped and fire resistant.

When I began my maritime career, young men who aspired to become ship's officers could attend (if they could afford it) the nautical academies maintained by New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and California. If they could not gain admission to one of these two-year schools, which were operated to qualify their graduates for seagoing positions and nothing more, they might find employment (at a picayune wage) as cadets aboard cargo ships.

They learned what they could while carrying out the unending assignments which were their lot. At the end of three years of this sort of apprentice-training, they could take the examinations for licenses as deck or engineer officers. It also was possible then, as it is today, for any seaman with at least three years of sea time to take the examinations for a license.

A great step forward was taken when the Maritime Commission (the predecessor of the present-day Maritime Administration) approved the establishment of the United States Merchant Marine Academy. Its wartime program was designed to provide competent licensed personnel in the shortest possible time. In the post-war period, the original educational concept was broadened and students were offered an accredited college course leading to a bachelor of science degree.

I am very proud of the fact that I was part of the United States Merchant Marine Academy instructional staff during the critical years after the war when we were building up the academic reputation of the school and raising it to collegiate status. It was a great day when the first class received their accredited degrees!

From coal burners to oil-fired steamers, from diesel engines to turbo-electric propulsion, from hand-trucks to forklifts, from pallet-boards to containers, from steam winches to electric, from boxed automobiles to roll-on, roll-off ships taking vehicles literally right off the highways, from plodding 10-knotters to cargo ships able to cruise at 33 knots, from tankers of 12,000 tons to 500,000 tons deadweight, from quarters little better than those on the 19th century clipper ships to the near-hotel standards of the newest ships, from "case-oil" ships carrying kerosene in crates of two five-gallon cans to liquefied natural gas carriers, from passenger ships which provided the *only* way to cross the oceans to passenger carriers used exclusively for vacation cruises, from longshoremen's "shape" to computerized hiring halls, from apprentices learning the profession by toiling at sea to college-level education for careers both afloat and ashore—many have been the changes which I have witnessed.

I have been a participant for more than half a century of watching, working with and being fascinated by ships. It truly has been, and is, a good life! ⚓

'Secret Operations: Refueling at Sea'

World War II oiler USS Neches was labeled a "Navy secret weapon" by Life Magazine.

Does this oiler look like part of a secret weapon?

It once was and not too long ago. Indeed many MSC mariners may recall that USNS Neches was described as a secret weapon by *Life Magazine,* by the historical division of the U.S. Navy and by Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz. The admiral once was Chief of Naval Operations and commanded the U.S. Pacific Fleet during World War II.

In its Aug. 20, 1945 edition, *Life Magazine* ran a full page photograph of the Neches as its Picture of the Week. The photo allowed the public to see for the first time, what *Life* described as one of the Navy's "secret operations: refueling at sea."

Noted *Life:* "So important was this refueling operation that Admiral Nimitz called it his "secret weapon."

Navy underway replenishment is relatively routine today and seamen who man MSC's naval fleet auxiliary are considered among the best in the world. However, mid-ocean refueling during World War II was considered innovative.

Observed *Life:* "Fleet oilers, going out into the battle areas to rendezvous with warships within range of enemy planes and submarines freed the fighting fleets from dependence on land bases, enabled them to stay at sea for months and strike at will anywhere in the big ocean.

"Bold methods of mid-ocean refueling while ships were on the move gave the fleet unheard-of freedom and endurance which, as much as its size and firepower, made the U.S. Navy a new kind of sea weapon."

According to historical division archives, the Neches photo was given to *Life Magazine* by the Navy. The photo was taken during replenishment operations in rough seas involving the carrier USS Lexington in early January 1945.

In an article written by Admiral Nimitz and published for *Petroleum Today* in its Spring 1961 issue, the wartime commander revealed that he was first executive officer and chief engineer aboard USS Maumee (AO-2) which in 1916 "pioneered" the logistic technique now known as underway replenishment.

As a young naval lieutenant,

Nimitz was aboard the Maumee when it stayed at anchor off Cuba to deliver water and oil to Navy warships.

However, in the case of battleships, it had to get under way and moor alongside these larger vessels to deliver fuel, Nimitz noted.

During World War I, Maumee was positioned in mid-Atlantic and served as a mobile fueling station in heavy seas and frigid or fair weather.

The first refueling operation involved a destroyer division.

"Our plans called for fueling two destroyers at a time, when wind and sea permitted—one on each side. In rough seas we could handle one destroyer on the lee side. With the prevailing northwesterly winds it was usually possible to maintain a course towards the destroyers' destination at speeds varying from five knots in rough seas to about 10 knots in smooth seas," Nimitz wrote.

In 1938–39, Nimitz as a brand new rear admiral further developed refueling operations. He then commanded Task Force Seven. The task force had been established to develop and train U.S. sailors and ground forces in fueling at sea and in amphibious landing operations.

"The refueling work by Task Force Seven made possible the extended naval operations in the Western Pacific in World War II," Admiral Nimitz wrote. "During that war, supply at sea included food, bombs and ammunition, personnel and all kinds of materials as well as fuel oil and gasoline. Our Navy's ability to remain at sea for long periods without resort to shore bases constituted a real secret weapon that surprised our enemy."

As a lieutenant in 1916 aboard the oiler USS Maumee, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz helped pioneer the technique of underway replenishment.

Navy Now Completing 3,000 Unreps Annually

Underway replenishment is almost routine today for the U.S. Navy, as routine as any operation can be which has huge ships sailing along side by side separated only by a few feet of water. They take place in all of the world's oceans at the rate of about 3,000 a year, half of which are made by MSC's oilers and a single stores ship.

Altogether, Navy has 35 unrep capable ships, including those manned by MSC. They include 16 oilers, 8 stores ships and 11 that provide ammunition, stores and fuel to receiving ships.

Most of the 3,000 plus Navy unreps are by ships sailing alongside their "customers" although MSC manned vessels are involved in approximately 35 over-the-stern refuelings each year to develop merchant marine capability in that technique.

The U.S. Navy, following up on a procedure which Admiral Nimitz developed, relies on underway replenishment more than the navies of other major world powers. And U.S. Navy unrep capability adds a new dimension to the U.S. combatant fleet.

Maritime Artifacts Raised From Lake

Photos by Kim Nielsen

The Ericsson screw propeller which caused a technological revolution in the 1840s is recovered.

Indiana's boiler is raised and eventually will be displayed by the Smithsonian Institution.

There were no lives lost when the Great Lakes ore carrier Indiana went down 121 years ago, but the loss of a ship is always a tragedy, as any seaman will vouch.

In the case of the Indiana, however, what is a tragic story has had a brighter twist.

Navy divers, working with staff members of the Smithsonian Institution and the Army Corps of Engineers, raised the Indiana's engine and screw from the deep last summer.

In doing so, officials say, exhibits have been made available to the Smithsonian that are comparable to the artifacts on display at the National Air and Space Museum.

The Indiana was among 44 then modern ships to be driven by the 19th century Ericcson propeller screw, a variation of which is found on most conventional vessels today.

John Ericcson, a Swedish immigrant, also designed the famous warship Monitor.

The four-blade Ericcson propeller pushed ships through the water as is done today. Before that ships were pulled by sidewheelers.

The propeller sparked a technological revolution in the 1840s that completely changed the role of both naval ships and commercial vessels.

One reason was that machinery for the sidewheeler, which took up the entire midship section of a vessel, was eliminated. That created additional space for cargo.

Ericcson's innovation was the first practical application of the screw propeller. It was used in 1836 by him and by Pettit Smith in England.

But no complete Ericcson engine and propeller of that period were available for showing or study until the sunken Indiana was rediscovered in 1975 lying at the bottom of northeastern Lake Superior, 118 feet down and five miles off the remote Crisp Point Lighthouse in Michigan.

She was found by a group of Wisconsin SCUBA divers, headed by John Steele, a Waukegan, Ill. banker.

Films of the wreck indicated the Ericcson screw was still intact. Its importance was instantly recognized by Dr. Richard J. Wright, a Great Lakes shipping historian who contacted the Smithsonian.

The extremely cold, salt free waters of Lake Superior had served as a preservative so that the engine screw and other artifacts of the Indiana were in very good condition.

"The steam power plant is an especially thrilling recovery," claims John Stine, the Smithsonian project director.

The plant consisted of a 13-foot high, three-ton boiler with the firebox still filled with wood. The engine, a preheater and miscellaneous piping also were recovered.

Smithsonian officials said it is the earliest marine steam plant in existence in North America which had an actual working history.

"It is probably one of the most significant large pieces of machinery acquired by the Smithsonian in the 20th century, outside the artifacts owned by Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum," a spokesman stated.

"Usually, if you find one of these engines, it has been altered from its original condition," Stine explained. "This engine has survived in a good state of preservation, in its original form. No one has ever seen a marine engine of this period in its original condition until now. The engine will yield important information about pre-Civil War propulsion systems and the evolution of such systems."

He said the entire propulsion system was recovered. Included were the boiler, the engine proper, the preheater and throttle systems, the feedwater, the feedwater pumps and the propeller and rudder. "It is the only system that exists intact today."

Also recovered from the 350-ton Indiana was the steering quadrant.

"For me the high point of the operation was finding the name of the manufacturer on the propeller,"

Continued

A Navy SCUBA diver climbs out of Lake Superior after inspecting the Indiana that sank 121 years ago.

Artifacts

Continued

Stine said. "That was quite a sophisticated piece of equipment to make in those days, and we will now be able to trace the history of this manufacturer."

He said the propeller weighed about two tons and was 10 feet in diameter.

Stine said the ship sunk after one of the propeller blades broke at the forging.

"It came off with such force that it struck the rudder and put a hole in it, turning the ship hard aport. The ship vibrated so badly that it opened the packing gland in the stern post because of the imbalance in the prop.

"The engineer and the captain shut down the throttle. The ship was dead in the water and they began to pump manually. But water rushed in through the packing gland around the propeller shaft which ran the length of the ship.

"The cargo of iron ore had been placed partially over the shaft so there was no way to stop the water from coming in and the ship slowly went down by the stern."

Stine said the screw was damaged after the Indiana ran aground in the Soo rapids near Sault Ste. Marie. He said there was a high rate of accidents in those days because of the "drunkenness of the crews and ignorance of the apparatus," cited in a Congressional report in 1838.

He added that the Great Lakes are "notorious" for developing bad weather with only a half hour's warning. "It's amazing that the engine survived," he said.

Stine paid particular tribute to the Navy divers headed by Lt. Cmdr. Robert Wells and Master Diver James Starcher. He also cited Les Lundin, master of the salvage vessel operated by the Army Corps of Engineers, and James Rosenbaum, master of the tug Lake Superior. ⚓

Smithsonian specialists Martin Burke and Lisa Mibach make a report on the ore carrier's rudder.

NOTES & LETTERS

Organizational boxes and people who occupy them are changing at MSC headquarters. Operations officer Capt. John Scott is taking over Plans, now the Strategic Mobility Office. J. Anthony English is acting director of a new headquarters office, Concept Development and Analysis. And Operations has been split into two elements--one managing fleet support ops, the other transportation operations. Capt. Henry Morris heads the former, Capt. John Eckert the latter.

ET1 DON C. GOAD

First MSC Sailor of the Quarter is First Class Electronics Technician Don Goad. He sails aboard USNS Mispillion and was cited for outstanding performance in updating electronic material records and supply allowance lists, and licking a long-standing problem in the Mispillion's navigation radar. A 10-year Navy vet, Goad has made Mispillion communications readiness the best ever. Nominations for outstanding Navy sailors are made by area commanders quarterly. A quarterly winner is automatically nominated for MSC Sailor of the Year.

Another MSC move to strengthen awareness of the command's many efforts to recognize its people is a new monthly publication, the Command Action Report. Due to start in November, it will go to top Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force officials to help them keep abreast of how MSC supports their own efforts. Also in the mill is a new award, the MSC Commander's Special Achievement Award. Anyone can make a nomination, in one paragraph or less than 200 words, and every winner will get a special certificate signed by his area commander and the MSC commander. Everyone is eligible, civilian employees, military personnel, foreign nationals employed by MSC and reservists in MSC-sponsored units. A major reason for the new award is to better recognize achievements by ship's crewmen for those many accomplishments that may not warrant a medal. Look for details in the December MSC Newsletter. And start looking around for that guy or gal who warrant special recognition for the jobs they have been doing since you will be in a position to make sure they get it.

Food for our own egos, that's what a recent letter from Arona McHugh provided. An author of a novel--The Calling of the Mercenaries--she said she was "utterly fascinated by the two Marty Gershen articles on sea women" in the July Sealift. An early seagoing soldier on an Army ship, she applauded MSC and Army hiring of women for maritime jobs, winding up with: "I wish I were their age again." Thanks, and we share your wish.

A final ship note, if you are in or around Japan, you might catch up with Boatique America, a ship that is cruising 13 Japanese ports loaded with 8,000 items ranging from beef and bathing suits to toys and towels--all from America. It's part of a push to promote sale of American goods in Japan. Nearly 150 American companies are taking part, providing goods worth $20 million--and all for sale.

Capt. Jim T. Gehrig, master of the oiler USNS Passumpsic, accepts [illegible] Unit Commendation from Rear Adm. Mark P. Frudden, commander of Naval Surface Group W[illegible]n Pacific. Passumpsic's crew earned the award "for meritorious service" during operations in the Indian [illegible]ean, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman. They were cited for "steadfast initiative, diligent resourcefulness and [illegible]al devotion to duty. Captain Gehrig said, "The crew is the best I could ever ask for. They are a dedicated group. This commendation was handed to me, but it definitely belongs to them."

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